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BOOKS RECEIVED.

AMERICAN STATE REPORTS.—Volume 56. San Francisco. Baneroft-Whitney Company. 1897.

We have so often testified in these columns to the excellence of this series of reports, that it needs but to be added that the present volume maintains the standard long since fixed by previous volumes. Besides a judicious selection of cases reported in full, with brief notes referring to previous cases in the same series, the volume before us is especially rich in monographic notes on important topics. The more elaborate of these are: *Fiducial Relations of Mortgagor and Mortgage* (2 pp.); *Agreements to Control the Future Voting of Stock at Corporate Elections* (15 pp.); *Architects' Certificates and Engineers' Estimates* (5 pp.); *Assignment of Expectancies* (22 pp.); *Subsequent Parol Agreement to Vary a Writing* (13 pp.); *Acknowledgments—interest of officers as a disqualification* (5 pp.); *Liability of Owners of Elevators Used for Passengers or Employees* (4 pp.); *Law of Lis Pendens* (25 pp.).

The only adverse criticism to be made of previous volumes was their unwieldy bulkiness. A marked improvement is noted in this respect in the present volume. By the use of a different paper, the size of the volume is considerably reduced, without diminishing the usual number of pages.

A TREATISE ON THE LAW OF BAILMENTS, INCLUDING CARRIERS, INNKEEPERS, AND PLEDGE.—By JAMES SCHOULER, LL. D., Professor in the Boston University Law School, and author of treatises on the "Law of Domestic Relations," "Wills," "Personal Property" and "Executors." Third edition. Boston. Little, Brown & Company. 1897.

Mr. Schouler is one of the few modern law writers who writes for the same reason that the poet sings—because he is full of his subject and cannot help it. His text-books are not machine-made, and turned out to order in a given time. There is about them something suggesting honest, hand-made work, and inviting the confidence which such work always inspires.

The present work has been before the public for some years, and has received the cordial approval of bench and bar. It is a thoroughly scholarly treatise; and excels rather in accuracy of statement than in the number of pages devoted to particular topics, or in the multitude of cases cited.

The new edition before us takes notice of the latest decisions of importance, and a chapter has been added upon the new topic of the Interstate Commerce Act of Congress. We heartily commend the work, not as a "case winner," or as a digest of "all the cases," but for use of lawyers who desire to equip themselves with sound notions on the subjects of which it treats.

A TREATISE ON THE LAW IN RELATION TO PROMOTERS AND THE PROMOTION OF CORPORATIONS.—By ARTHUR M. ALGER. Boston. Little, Brown & Company. 1897.

The term "promoter" is one of ill omen, especially to the practitioner in those States which enjoyed the recent disastrous distinction of being "on a boom." Virginia was especially distinguished in that respect. Every cross-roads village expected to rival New York as a business centre, and town lots were boomed accordingly. The term "promoter," until then an unfamiliar phrase, was on every tongue, and promotion was the order of the day. Outlying lands, scarcely pro-

ducing enough to pay the annual taxes, were purchased at nominal prices and by judicious promotion were "stocked in" at fabulous prices, the promoters pocketing the proceeds. But the day of retribution came, and lawyers and judges have been wrestling with promoters' law ever since. If Mr. Alger's book had appeared a few years earlier, it would have been a greater boon to the profession. But there is still need for such a treatise, and we hope the book will meet with that reception which good work always deserves.

Mr. Alger's treatment of his subject exhibits a careful and intelligent study of the latest sources of the law, with no evidence of padding. His propositions are stated with clearness and with apparent accuracy, even in minute details. His discussion of the liability of promoters of *de facto* corporations (sec. 249 *et seq.*) deserves especial notice. Lawyers who have not access to large libraries will appreciate the author's method of developing his topics with illustrative cases, in which the facts are concisely stated, with the conclusions of law applied by the courts—frequently in the language of the opinions. English cases are freely cited, and with advantage, since this branch of company law has been more fully worked out in England than in America.

The book is a pioneer in its line, and practitioners will find it a valuable addition to their libraries.

The volume cites about eight hundred cases, amongst which we observe our old friends, *Crump v. U. S. Mining Co.*, 7 Gratt. 353, and *Bosher v. Richmond etc. Land Co.*, 89 Va. 555. The latter is noticed at some length. The later case of *Central Land Co. v. Obenchain*, 92 Va. 130, is also cited. The work contains 300 pages, and is printed in Messrs. Little, Brown & Company's best style. The index exhibits the common fault of having the sub-heads arranged without reference to alphabetical order.

GENERAL DIGEST.—Vol. III. Lawyers' Co-operative Publishing Co., Rochester, N. Y.

"This volume covers all the reported decisions of all the courts in the United States, of the higher courts of England and the Supreme Court of Canada, with many important cases from other Canadian courts. Including all officially reported cases and all cases to be officially reported, which were first published between January 1, 1897, and July 1, 1897."

We have had occasion more than once to examine the syllabi and digest paragraphs prepared by this company, and have always found them excellent. They contain concise, but clear statements of points actually decided, omitting *dicta* and arguments. They are accurate and entirely reliable.

The analytical arrangement of the subjects leaves nothing to be desired. Anything in the book can be readily found without difficulty. The running headlines at the tops of the pages obviate the necessity of examination of any portion of the subject except what is desired. It is difficult to imagine a more perfect system.

The book, however, is something more than a mere digest. The more important topics are annotated. Take, for instance, the subject of *Corporations*. It is digested under eight *principal* divisions, with many sub-divisions under each. Under the heading "Promoters," you will find one collection of cases on when a sale by promoters to the corporation at a profit is valid, and another, when such sale is invalid. Under the same title, "Promoters," will be found a long list of authorities to the effect that a corporation is not liable on a contract entered into by its incorporators before the incorporation. The book is full of such valuable annotations. These annotations are invaluable to one who has access to a large library, and are of great value to one with only a few Reports. We commend the book to the profession.

M. P. BURKS.